**#SpookySlick 2019 Ficlets Collection**

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# #SpookySlick 2019 Ficlets Collection

by TheSilverQueen


Summary

A collection of all the ficlets for #SpookySlick 2019, the prompt calendar for which can be found HERE . Summary will change to reflect the most current day, and warnings will be chapter-specific at the beginning of each.

Day 1: Scenting = After the Stag King ended the fae-human wars, the truce demanded one human tribute each year to be given to the fae. Will has just been chosen as this year's tribute.

Day 2: Surprise Heat/Rut = Only the children of demons or angels go into heat, so when Will wakes up one morning sweaty and horny instead of sweaty and afraid, he realizes there must've been quite a few things his mother didn't tell his father. To get answers, Will enacts an ancient ritual meant to summon his mother. Instead, he accidentally summons Hannibal.


Notes

See the end of the work for notes

# Scenting

Chapter Summary

After the Stag King ended the fae-human wars, the truce demanded one human tribute each year to be given to the fae. Will has just been chosen as this year's tribute.

Chapter Notes

Warnings: implied human sacrifice, disturbing description of dead body, noncon transformation

Inspired by: the Moon & Sun series by Holly Lisle for the fae bits, The Hunger Games by Suzanne Collins for the tribute bits, and the Hollow Kingdom trilogy by Clare B. Dunkle for the king bits. Also a *la petite mort* wordplay that I have been DYING to use all my life.

I want you all to know that this was intended to be a quick and dirty oneshot, 3k max, about Will frolicking in the forests and being sniffed up by our favorite cannibae. It is now double that and comes with a side bonus of sexytimes, fae, and an entire goddamn world history. I blame Victorine.

See the end of the chapter for more notes

When Jack comes to him, mouth set in a hard line, Will already knows what he is going to say, and he doesn't even need empathy. There is only one reason that a council elder would be coming to him with a wooden box the day of the harvest celebration.

"Every year we offer tribute," Jack says the second the door is open. "This year it is you."

Will wants to say, *What a shock*, but that would be rude. And, more importantly, it would be untraditional. The rituals of tribute and harvest are centuries old, and even though they may have started off as just words expressed by mouth and pen, after so much time has passed and blood spilt, they mean something now. They have power, just as true names do.

"Every year we offer tribute," Will replies. "This year it is me."

Then Jack gingerly offers him the wooden box, and Will carefully removes his gloves before he accepts it. This too is tradition; the box can only be touched by the chosen tribute, for to touch it is to be marked by the power of the fae, and humans have long since learned that no amount of cold iron or distance can keep them away forever.

To an outsider, the box might seem simple, but once Will lays his bare hands upon it, it glows despite the overcast sky. This is bloodwood, made from trees deep in the lands of the fae that sprouted when the first fae and human wars broke out. With no fae to sing to them and feed them magic to grow because they had been chased off, these trees had instead fed upon the humans that stumbled upon them. The fae had taken those trees and forged weapons in fires fed by human bones and quenched in human tears, and even now, the weapons are only mentioned in whispers in oft-forgotten stories. Bloodwood is the reason that the humans lost.

Will makes to shut the door, but Jack lingers despite the ritual's completion. "You surely don't intend to stay here all night, do you?" Will asks. "We all know what to do to prepare if chosen. It's not like I'm going to run."

"You've touched the box," Jack says. "You and I both know running is futile."

"So you're still here because . . . ?"

Jack hesitates, and then he hunches his shoulders. It's not shame – even council elders are not immune to be chosen as tribute, and he's relieved that he wasn't chosen even though he would never admit to it – but it's certainly something he doesn't want to say in the open.

Too bad. Will has already touched the box; the power of the fae has already been unleashed upon their village. There won't be any more secrets until Will is dead and the box returned, to be carefully hidden until next year's tribute is selected. Closing the door and speaking in whispers would be as effective at keeping secrets from the fae as talking to a bloodwood tree.

"Jack?" Will prompts.

"The council could be persuaded to choose another," Jack says in a rush.

Will laughs. He can't help it. "The fae take everyone, Jack. Old and young, sick and hale, men and women, alpha and omega. There's no going back once chosen."

Even death can't save Will now. Until the ritual is complete and he belongs to the fae, nothing can harm Will. They could literally chop his head off and still his heart would beat and his lungs breathe. It's been . . . thoroughly tested.

Never let it be said that the humans went quietly to the slaughter once the wars were over.

Jack sighs. "You are invaluable to us, Will."

"No one is invaluable, Jack. That's the point of tribute. We live and we die at their mercy." Will taps a finger on the box, which just gleams even more. "Some die sooner than others."

"I never took you for a defeatist."

"And I never took you for a fool. Let it go, Jack. By tomorrow, I'll be dead, and you'll be safe for another year. The council can even turn my land into more farmland; they've been after me for years."

"You won't – "

“Jack.” He turns away from the door and places the box onto the nearest table. Further argument is useless, and Will’s pretty much hit his limit on social interaction for the day. “You don’t need my empathy for the village to survive. You prospered long before I came, and you’ll prosper long after I die. Besides, it doesn’t take empathy to catch killers. Just good eyes and sharp ears and patience, right?”

Jack’s face goes red. He’d said the exact same words when Will had arrived and bargained his skills for a place to stay. It’s sad to think that in only a few years, Jack would become so dependent on the skills he’d once derided that he would even consider defying the fae.

“Good-bye, Jack. I’d like to spend the rest of my life in peace.”

Then he shuts the door. Because really, that’s more than enough socializing for one day, never mind his last day alive.

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The ritual of tribute is really very simple. The fae had designed it that way, out of cruelty, out of grief, and out of practicality.

Cruelty, to ensure that humanity would not forget that they had broken covenant first.

Grief, to ensure that the fae would not forget that their forests had been burned, their children slaughtered, and their rivers destroyed.

Practicality, to ensure that both human and fae were bound forever, and neither could pretend to misunderstand.

After the wars were over, after fae and humankind had been decimated, after the land had been scarred beyond recognition, the truce had been struck: the fae would get the forests and the mountains and the night time, and the humans would get the valleys and the plains and the day time. No human would enter fae lands, and no fae would enter human lands. Fae would transform their bloodwood weapons into tokens of tribute, and humans would transform their weapons into methods of tribute. And to settle the blood debt humankind had evoked when they killed the Raven King, each village would offer to the fae one human at harvest and in turn the fae would offer to the humans their songs of plenty at planting.

The truce has held for thousands of years.

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Will opens the box. It is very simple, for while humans embellish with decorations and precious metals, fae use magic. The box glows with the power of the Stag King, who had ended the final war and decided, out of mercy or perhaps spite, to allow the rest of humankind to live. He had commissioned boxes of tribute out of bloodwood and brought each to life with one drop of his blood. He hadn’t needed to give it power, for every human still alive at the time of the truce had been forced to give one drop of theirs to ensure that the boxes could never be destroyed.

Tonight, one drop of Will’s blood will join the blood of his ancestors and the blood of every tribute before him.

Will opens the box with bated breath. Only the tribute knows what the tokens are, for by accepting them, they become part of the tribute – and only by death at the hand of the fae can they be removed, and then placed back in the box for the next tribute.

To his surprise, there are only three tokens inside. It is true that the fae are known for their honesty, but not necessarily for their simplicity or practicality when extravagance could be chosen. Will had expected grand displays of magic to drive the message home that humankind had lost – and would continue to lose forever more. After all, every attempt at reawakening the war and throwing off the yoke of tribute has been quashed with bloodshed to rival any human war. The fae had wiped out every resister, and then proceeded to also wipe out every single person in their line. Whole families, down to the last child and most distant cousin, had been decimated as though they had never existed.

The first token is a necklace, intricately wrought of feathers as gold as the rising sun. The color of fae blood, Will realizes, for these feathers must be for the Raven King who the humans had lured into daylight and ruthlessly decapitated with cold iron.

The second token is a bracelet, red as roses and patterned after many pointed antlers. When Will lifts it out, it vibrates once and then splits into two. Not bracelets then; cuffs, just as the Stag King had cuffed each and every surviving human to bleed them.

The third and final token is a crown. It is made out of bloodwood and nearly alive with magic, and Will can hardly decide that it is one color when it changes to another. It is large, so large Will wonders at how he's ever going to walk around with it on his head, but when he lifts it, it is as light as the feathers carved so beautifully into the design. But it is sharp too, for circling and supporting the feathers are antlers that reach towards the sky, and the points are sharp enough that Will knows they would draw blood should someone other than a fae attempt to remove them.

Will looks at the tokens of tribute – the tokens of his death – and feels a sense of excitement. This is magic, real magic, magic that once sundered the seas and broke the earth, and he's never seen anything like it before.

Death is such a small price to pay to see this kind of raw power. And honestly, the fae will probably give Will a cleaner, swifter death than the villagers.

Will goes to bathe and dress. Soon the sun will be setting, and then it will be time.

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The villagers are standing outside of his door once the sun begins to set. This too is ritual, to ensure that every human knows the price that peace must be bought with and to ensure that no human runs. They will stand in a line on either side of the path from his house to the tribute circle, and slowly they will gather as Will draws closer until they are all in great crowds as he is sacrificed.

Will takes a deep breath and reaches for the tokens. First is the necklace, which glimmers briefly before sinking deep into his skin. If Will hadn't seen the necklace with his own eyes, he would think he had merely gotten drunk and gotten a very good tattoo. Next is a cuff upon

each wrist; they too glimmer and become a particularly vivid red mark on his skin. Finally, he takes the crown and places it upon his head.

However, the crown doesn't become a shimmering tattoo. Instead it becomes so light it's practically insubstantial, and when Will looks into a mirror he sees that the crown has become pure magic, glittering and golden-red, with feathers waving gently in the nonexistent wind and antlers growing ever higher towards the sky. It almost looks like his head is on fire with magic the color of the setting sun, but there is no pain, only the exhilaration of being one with true power.

It's beautiful.

Will steps out of his home for the last time with his head held high, and heads for the tribute circle.

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The tribute circle is made out of cold iron, forged from the weapons humankind had melted down after the war and laid out in a great circle, half on human lands and half into the fae forests. It serves as a warning to humans and fae about where their land ends and the other's begins. Only someone holding a tribute box may pass through it and not be immediately slaughtered.

As Will approaches, the three council elders stand and begin next part of the ritual.

"For untold millennia, the fae and humans had lived in peace."

"Then the humans crossed into the forests of the fae, pretending to offer gifts, and enticing the Raven King into the sunlight of human valleys so they could slaughter him."

"The Stag King ended the war, and in his benevolence, he allowed us to live," Jack finishes, eyes fixed firmly on the ground.

The rest of the crowd answers to complete the ritual. "In the honor of the Stag King, we offer tribute, so that our treachery and his mercy may never be forgotten, and so that the peace may thrive."

"So peace may thrive," Will echoes, and crosses into the tribute circle.

Abruptly, all sound vanishes – it's like the world has gone completely quiet. Will knows this isn't true, because the chant cannot stop until Will has stepped into fae lands, but all he can hear is the thudding of his own heart and the humming from the bloodwood box he clutches in his increasingly sweaty hands.

*One step at a time,* Will tells himself. *One step, and then another, and then another.*

Finally, after an eternity, he arrives at the line where forest begins and valley ends.

This is where Will is going to die.

He takes a deep breath to steel himself, and feels the humming in the bloodwood box start to be matched by the humming of the tokens he bears on his skin. It makes his heart race – perhaps the fae like to hunt for their tributes and prefer the blood to run fresh and fast. Or perhaps it is nearly the fact that he is literally breathing in magic right now. Or –

A bark breaks his thoughts.

Will frowns. He shouldn't hear any sound until he's passed into the forest –

Will looks down just in time to see Winston go racing past him in a golden brown blur, barking madly, and Will is nearly thrown off his feet as his faithful dog goes plunging into the forest.

All thoughts of tribute and ritual fly out of Will's mind. The fae don't mind animals, and Will's pack has been able to pass in and out of the forests without being harmed. But tonight is different, tonight is when humans are meant to die and fae are out to hunt them, and Winston definitely can't be mistaken for a wild animal.

"Winston, come back!" Will yells, and he runs straight into the forest, not even noticing as he passes into fae lands.

He isn't sure how long he runs, chasing after the sound of his dog. Winston will come if Will whistles or calls, but he has to be able to hear Will, and the fae forests are alive with ancient magic that twists paths and distorts sounds. Once it was easy to travel through, but the forests had responded to the fae's desperation during the war, and now it's more likely that a path leads to a death trap than anything else.

Then Will trips over something, and he goes head over heels into the dirt. The box goes flying from his hands and the world goes rolling around him until finally everything settles and Will can breathe again.

Well, for a moment.

Because in the next moment, Will sees exactly what he tripped over, and his breath goes away again.

It's a woman. Well, more like a girl, honestly, with the wide eyes and long hair of youth, and her mouth is gaping open in surprise too.

The only difference is that her wide-eyed surprise will never end, for she is quite dead. She's been mounted onto a tree, and Will's empathy can easily see how she was lifted and slammed onto the unforgiving tree branches that punctured her torso. She had kicked and screamed and begged, and still she had died.

Only a fae could do such a thing.

Will gulps involuntarily. He wonders, briefly, if this is how all tributes who have entered the forests die – if Will and the countless other tributes tonight are also going to be mounted and die gasping before the sun rises.

“Excuse me? Did you drop this?”

Will yelps in shock and nearly falls over a second time. The speaker is a tall man dressed in the weirdest clothes Will’s ever seen, but Will forgets that when he sees what the man is carrying. And what the man has beside him.

“Winston!”

Winston barks up a storm as he races towards Will, and Will hurts the dirt for the third time, but this time he’s laughing as Winston showers him in licks and whacks his tail against every single part of Will he can reach. For a moment, he’s at home again, surrounded by his hearth and his house and his dogs, and it is wonderful.

In the next, Will sees the box glowing softly in the man’s hands, and the laughter leaves him.

“Uh, yes,” Will says awkwardly. “I dropped it when I tripped.”

The man passes Will the box without problem; he must be another tribute or something, because it doesn’t seem to hurt him at all.

“I wasn’t aware that tributes were allowed pets,” the man says mildly.

Will pets Winston, who finally acquiesces to sit and stop barking. “It shouldn’t break the rules. I found him wandering around years ago and adopted him, so he’s not trained to hunt fae. And the fae have always allowed animals to pass freely in their lands. I definitely thought I left him tied up with the others though.”

“Others?”

“Can’t say no to a dog.”

The man hums. “Most animals who pass in and out of the forest end up bearing the touch of the fae upon them,” he says, eyes sharp even in the darkness. “Most humans won’t have anything to do with them.”

“Winston would never hurt me. He needed a home and I had space, so I took him in. I’d send him home but I have no idea which way is out now.”

The man offers his arm. “Come with me. I believe I can show you the way, good sir.”

Will isn’t stupid, so he remains on the ground with his dog. Winston had barked at the man, so he’s not a hallucination or apparition, but that doesn’t mean Will really wants to be tempted into breaking the truce. “He’ll probably wander out when the sun rises. It’s okay.”

“I did not suggest that you cross over and break the truce,” the man says pointedly, as though he knows exactly what Will is thinking. “You can bring your dog to the edge and convince him to cross back over until the ritual is over. As long as you remain in the fae lands, the truce is satisfied; it will only break if you attempt to leave.”

And it's kind of cutting it pretty close, but the fae love word games and mind tricks; they'd probably appreciate the loophole.

Will reaches up and takes the man's hand. "I'm Will."

"And I am Hannibal."

Will gives him the side eye as they start to walk. Those syllables had rang with power. "You really want me to know your true name while we're in fae lands?"

"I know yours, do I not?"

"Fair point."

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Will honestly has no idea how Hannibal knows where he is going; they are surrounded on all sides by trees, trees, and more trees. He's never seen so many trees in his life and they're all starting to look the same to him. Yet Hannibal walks with purpose and confidence, hardly ever pausing, as if he has some sort of internal compass, and Will follows because, well, where else is he going to go?

"These trees all look the same to me," Will says, after they pass yet another grove. "Are you sure we're not going in circles?"

Hannibal flashes him a sly smile. In other circumstances, Will might have called it flirtatious, but like hell is any alpha going to flirt with a male omega. "Do you have a vendetta against circles?"

"It's my last night on earth. I don't have a vendetta against anything."

"Truly? Not even against those you condemned you to death?"

"We all die, in the end," Will says. "And my kind aren't really welcomed. I think I'll get a cleaner death from the fae than from anyone else."

"Your kind?"

"I'm an omega. Male. I can't sire kids and I sure as hell can't bear them. It drives alphas nuts because they're usually gung-ho about expanding the population."

Hannibal makes a soft sound, like a tsk, only a lot more venomous. Almost like a snake. "Bearing children is hardly an omega's only role. And the human population is large enough as it is; there is only so much land to go around."

"That's what I said. But after a few bad harvest years, everyone is suddenly baby crazy." Will pets Winston, jogging faithfully at his side with his tongue hanging happily from his jaws. He doesn't seem at all bothered that they're probably lost in a fae forest. "I've got my dogs, and that's more than enough."

Suddenly, there's a break in the trees, and Will sees the welcome sight of something other than bark and leaves. There's a little stream running bubbling along, and the tree canopy opens up to a blanket of stars. Will slows his pace and drinks in the sight; most of the water sources were corrupted during the wars, and the pollution of forging weapons and shedding blood takes a long time to go away. There aren't many places in human lands where an actual stream or river is blue and fresh, as opposed to trickling and dry.

Hannibal matches him, head tilted back to view the open sky of glittering stars. "Beautiful, isn't it?"

"Yes," Will breathes. "I've never seen anything like it."

"No midnight tumbles in the fields? You can't have worried about becoming pregnant."

Will shoots him a look. "I thought we established that I have no interest in breaking the truce? That would include wandering around at night." And maybe any other day Will might have stopped there, but. Well. It's his last night on earth. What does he have to lose? There's no one to pity him. "And besides, no one would want me. Male omega, remember? The baby factory is not – hey!"

Hannibal, who is currently leaning in so close he might as well merge with Will's shirt, doesn't back off. His eyes are closed and his entire body turned towards Will, as if Will is the only being in existence.

"Are you – are you scenting me?"

It's not rude, not really. If everyone can scent, then doing it isn't any stranger than looking with eyes. It is, however, a little personal, and usually reserved for family members.

Hannibal opens his eyes. Will has no idea how he missed the fact that Hannibal's eyes are such a rich shade of brown – they're almost red-brown, like the bloodwood of his tribute token. "You speak the truth," he says, like he thinks Will is a lying liar who lies. "You smell . . . very interesting."

"You've never smelled wet dog before? It's, uh, pretty potent."

Hannibal's mouth twitches. It's a smile, of sorts, but this one reaches his eyes and flushes his cheeks. "I smell that too. But I was referring to your actual scent. You've done a very good job burying it beneath your pets and your wools and your ash, but I can smell it. No wonder the humans feared you. You smell of *potential*."

The world narrows in on Hannibal as he speaks. Will feels drunk, except he hasn't touched spirits since his father's death. He forgets about the tokens bound into his skin, about Winston lapping at the stream, about the box that drops from his rapidly numbing fingers. Maybe it's the fact that no alpha has ever gotten as close as Hannibal, but Will knows exactly what Hannibal is talking about, because Hannibal's scent is indescribable. It's like an approaching rainstorm, just a hint of raw and dangerous power, and Will is suddenly more turned on than he's ever been in his entire life.

“Now who is scenting?” Hannibal teases.

And Will – who has never set a toe out of line his entire life – Will takes another great inhalation of Hannibal’s potent scent, and he throws caution to the winds. If the fae wanted him to be a virgin, they should’ve killed him already.

“I don’t see you objecting,” Will says, and he feels a thrum of power run under his skin at the way Hannibal visibly swallows.

“Do you still object to tumbles under a midnight sky?” Hannibal asks, offers, *purrs*.

He’s got silk in his voice and fire in his eyes and a thickening in his pants that Will really, really wants to see, and Will can’t find a single reason to object. He puts his arms around Hannibal’s neck and his legs around Hannibal’s waist, and he glories in the way Hannibal groans and shudders as they kiss and kiss and kiss.

Together, they smell of lightning and thunder and rain, and for the first time, Will thinks that maybe being a male omega is just fine.

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Afterwards, Will lies onto the soft grass and lets Hannibal snuffle at his hair and rub gentle circles in his stomach. He almost regrets that it’s his last night on earth; he would like to have a lot more tumbles in the grass with Hannibal.

“What’s wrong?” Hannibal asks.

Will looks at him, with his hair in complete disarray from Will’s fingers and his cheeks ruddy from exertion, and feels a great swelling of emotion in his chest. It’s not love, but Will’s empathy means he can already tell that it could be, if they had any time. “I like sex.”

“I am glad. So why the regret?”

“It kind of sucks that I only found this out on my last night on earth.”

Hannibal pulls back and frowns. “You keep saying that.”

Will waves his wrist at him. The antler markings are faint, but Hannibal has eyes sharp enough to wander around a magical fae forest; he can probably see it. “I’m a tribute, just like you. I’ll be dead before sunrise.”

“Who said that?”

“The truce? The – ” Now it is Will’s turn to frown. “The truce between the fae and the humans. You can’t not know about it.”

Hannibal remains silent.

“They sent you in here without telling you it was a death sentence? And I thought my village was backwards.”

“No, I entered this place willingly.”

Will thinks about this for a minute. Then another. When it still fails to make sense to his admittedly Hannibal-scent-addled-brain, he says, “Right, I’m very confused. Mind telling me where you’re from and why you’d willingly walk into the fae forest to be slaughtered without knowing about the truce?”

And Hannibal, the bastard, looks him straight in the eyes as he says, “I am from Lithuania. And I didn’t enter this forest to be slaughtered.”

Lithuania. The fae have no cities the way humans do, but if they did, the closest equivalent to a capitol would be Lithuania. It’s the seat of the fae king, the place where the Raven King was lured from and killed, the place where the Stag King lured the humans in and dealt them a crushing defeat. It’s said to be made of magic, where fae dance under the stars to sing to the forests and the land and the sea to renew the ancient rites of mother nature, and where the first bloodwood weapons had been forged.

Will’s voice surprisingly doesn’t shake as it all clicks to together. “You didn’t enter this forest to slaughter because you . . . you came to do the slaughtering. You’re the fae king.”

Hannibal dips his head. Even as Will watches, his form blurs and lengths and grows, until his skin is as black as night and his eyes as red as blood, with a crown of antlers that towers above Will and claws long enough to disembowel him in seconds. There is a tuft of feathers around his neck and his body is covered in fur that gleams under the stars. If anything embodies the inhuman nature of the fae, it is this shape of darkness and starlight and blood. No wonder fae don’t wear clothes. Hannibal is naked by human definitions, but Will would never be anything less than utterly transfixed by the sight of him.

Hannibal’s true form. No wonder he hadn’t minded telling Will his true name.

“I told you: my name is Hannibal,” he says. “I am the Ravenstag King.”

Will tries very hard not to shrink into the grass. He had accepted Jack’s proclamation of tribute with his head held high, and he doesn’t want to die with any less dignity.

“Am I going to die now?”

Hannibal tilts his head. He looks like he should be unbalanced by his crown of antlers, but he remains as regal as ever. “Why do you say that?”

“I am the tribute. It’s my duty to die.”

Hannibal leans down and runs one shiny claw along Will’s neck. It’s so sharp that one swallow would slice Will’s throat to ribbons. “That is true,” Hannibal says quietly. “I struck the truce as such. But there are so many things that death can mean, my dear Will. Death can mean a journey, or a passing on, or a transformation. Your language is so imprecise compared to ours; it gives us great joy to play with it.”

“You struck the truce?”

Hannibal shrugs his great shoulders. “I had grown antlers since the humans had last seen me. I saw no reason to correct them when they called me the Stag King.”

And Will had thought Hannibal’s form was amazing, but now wings of ebony and starlight unfold from his back, glowing and flickering like fireflies. The edges keep blurring in and out of Will’s sight, like they’re just beyond the comprehension of Will’s fragile, tiny, mortal mind.

Something tickles at the back of Will’s mind. But it’s too grand of an idea. So grand.

Beyond the realm of the fae, though?

Will closes his eyes and breathes, and then opens his eyes and gazes up into the eyes of the fae king, and he *knows*.

“Humans beheaded you,” Will realizes. “But that isn’t enough to kill a fae king. You just . . . grew a new head, and this time antlers came with it. You’re the Raven King and the Stag King. You – you were at the start of the first war, and you ended the last war. Just how – how old *are* you?”

“Your language have no word for how old I am,” Hannibal replies. “So long as there are fae, there is a fae king, and I have been king since very near the beginning of us. I watched your kind crawl out of the mud, and I imagine that one day I will see you crumble into dust. I will shed no tears that day.”

Hannibal’s claw stops, right in the middle of Will’s throat, and he taps once, twice, thrice. “But you, Will – I would shed tears for you.”

And then he *takes the necklace off*.

Will screams. He can’t stop himself. It isn’t pain, not really, but nor is it pleasure. It’s just an overflowing feeling, like every nerve is firing and every hair on his body is standing up, and his eyes roll back in his head as he collapses and pants on the grass.

“Yes, it’s quite intense,” Hannibal remarks casually, like he hasn’t just taken off the token that can only be removed with death. “I think you’ll be rather glorious once I am finished with you.”

Will closes his eyes and thinks of the girl tribute, mounted on the tree. Hannibal had done that, had come close in human form and then gored her with his antlers, and bade the tree to grow around and into her, to take nourishment from her body. “Are you going to mount me on a tree too?”

“Only if you ask nicely. You haven’t gotten the right skin for sex against tree bark, I’m afraid.”

Before Will can do more than gape at him, Hannibal reaches down and pulls the cuffs off one by one.

This time, Will doesn't scream, but that's only because he bites down hard enough to draw blood. He won't give Hannibal the satisfaction.

Hannibal kneels down, elegantly, like a deer folding down to rest in the grass, and reaches out so that his hands hover delicately on either side of Will's head. The bloodwood crown is humming now, thrumming in recognition of the king who had forged it so many centuries ago, and Will suspects that if anyone was watching they would think his head was on fire with magic.

This time, Hannibal hesitates.

"Get it over with," Will hisses. "Give me the mercy of a clean death. At least the humans didn't torture you when they cut your head off."

Hannibal sighs. "I'm not going to kill you, Will."

"I thought the fae didn't lie."

"We don't. As I said, death can mean many things." Hannibal smiles, teeth shockingly white against his dark skin. "Your kind had a language once; I believe you called it French. You had a very amusing term: *la petite mort*. A form of death, if you will."

"Which is?"

"Why, Will," Hannibal says, "it is exactly what you and I have just been doing in the grass. Several times over, in fact."

"You – "

Hannibal yanks the crown off so swiftly that Will thinks he might have pulled some of Will's hairs out with it. He throws it to the side, carelessly, but that's the last thing Will remembers.

If he had thought the feeling was overwhelming when Hannibal removed the cuffs and the necklace, this is a dozen, a hundred, a thousand times worse. Will screams and screams and screams, and the world shatters into a thousand colors in his eyes and the grass rubs his skin raw like he's being burned and the very faintest exhalation of Hannibal against his mouth tears the breath right from his lungs. He'd never imagined death could be so painful without a single drop of blood being drawn.

And then, quite suddenly, it is over.

Will gasps and pants and breathes and wonders why he is still breathing.

"I thought," he says, and his throat burns as he speaks, "I thought I said to kill me."

"I have," Hannibal replies. He withdraws, taking the warmth of his skin with him and the scent of rainstorms and power, and stands. "William Graham of the human race is dead. Long live Will of the fae."

Will opens his eyes to ask what Hannibal is rambling on about, but the words die in his throat.

The colors that had burst in his eyes while he was screaming? They aren't gone. If anything they are a thousand times more intense, and there are so many colors he has no name for. He can see much farther too; with the setting of the sun and surrounded by so many trees, Will hadn't been able to make out much past a few feet, but now he can see past the stream and bushes and it's completely clear. He can make out each individual leaf on the branches, the individual fireflies flitting about, the individual blades of grass waving gently in the wind. He can hear the bubbling stream and the cries of the birds and the whispers of fae dancing around as they celebrate.

And when he looks at Hannibal, it's indescribable. He can understand why Hannibal is the fae king, and has been for thousands of years.

"Now you see," Hannibal says. "Now you know."

Will swallows. "Why me?" Hannibal was as surprised as he that Will survived the removal of the tribute tokens, although he hid it better. It's his first time too, in a way.

"Humans are split into males and females. Fae aren't bound to such crude definitions; we are sire or carrier, and we can be either or both as we choose. When our kind began to intermingle with the humans, those children became what you now call alpha and omega. No human could ever hope to impregnate you, Will; you are an omega due to your fae blood, and you are strong beyond anything a human could ever hope to understand."

And Will really doesn't have a hope of sorting through all of that without some good quality alone time, so he just asks, "What happens now?"

"Now, you come with me. Tonight we will celebrate the first time one of those we feared lost forever have returned to us . . . and then perhaps we shall have time to talk."

"About?"

Hannibal grasps his hand and lifts him to his feet, but this time Will can feel the effort in the motion, feel the pull of those muscles and the humming of that magic, and when he resists, just a little, he can see how Hannibal truly has to work to keep pulling Will upright. The fae don't choose kings based solely on strength, after all, and Will's newfound status as a fae means he isn't that much physically weaker than Hannibal.

"Why," Hannibal says slyly against Will's ear, "about what kind of crown you would like, my queen."

FINIS

Chapter End Notes

A/N: And then Will goes to fetch the rest of his pack into the forest (they're all waiting at the forest line but only Winston was brave enough to run straight in for Will) while Hannibal rewards Winston with a nice dinner for leading him to Will. And then they rule over the fae as King and Queen for the rest of time.

Day 2: Surprise Heat/Rut = There be demons and magic and accidental summonings, oh my!

# Surprise Heat/Rut

Chapter Summary

Only the children of demons or angels go into heat, so when Will wakes up one morning sweaty and horny instead of sweaty and afraid, he realizes there must've been quite a few things his mother didn't tell his father. To get answers, Will enacts an ancient ritual meant to summon his mother. Instead, he accidentally summons Hannibal.

Chapter Notes

Warnings: I guess interspecies romance with demon Hanni and half-human Will.

Inspired by: the TV show Supernatural (although I honestly stopped regularly watching after whatever season it was that the angels were cast out of Heaven) and by the TV show Good Omens. I unequivocally recommend the latter, and the former only if you want to lose your ability to be believe that dead characters will stay dead. Also, given that these two are the main foundations of my religious knowledge, anything related to actual religion in this fic is 1000% probably wrong.

Dynamics: Omega!Will (Hanni is his own thing)

See the end of the chapter for more notes

Will wakes up sweating, hot, and horny as all hell. The first isn't that uncommon, thanks to the nightmares that plague him, but he didn't have any last night. The second depends on whether or not he let the fire die down overnight, but he didn't light any fire last night. The third is as foreign to Will as walking on water; it's hard to get aroused by someone when all Will can see is uncomfortable truths buried inside. And even the few times it had happened, he's never felt such a powerful urge.

Like, Will is seriously contemplating walking to town and letting the first person who sees him have at him. He even gets as far as pulling off his pants before his brain catches up.

Will staggers to the mirror, watching as his dogs part before him like the red sea. Normally they'd be barking in greeting or whining for breakfast, or even rubbing up to him in friendly canine affection, but today they're silent and strange. Not wary or afraid, but just . . . watchful. Like their eyes are telling them that this is the same human who cuddles them and pets them and feeds them, but their noses are saying something completely different.

When Will catches sight of himself in the mirror, he understands exactly why.

Gold eyes.

“God damn it,” Will says.

---

*And the Lord said to his angels,* Let your transgressions be known to man, and be forever marked in gold. *And the angels looked upon the faces of the children of those they had lain with, and lo, no longer were their children’s eyes green or blue or brown or grey or auburn or black; instead they were as gold as the sun, so that man might know where angels had meddled where they ought not to.*

---

Half an hour later, Will is cursing. He keeps sweating all over his keyboard, and he’s rapidly running out of towels and clean shirts, but he’s finally managed to log into his computer and get onto Google. The first results for *gold eyes* aren’t promising.

GET YOUR ANGELIC/DEMONIC ANCESTRY KIT TODAY FOR 50% OFF, the ad proclaims.

The second result is: FIVE WAYS TO HIDE YOUR GOLD EYES.

90% OF PEOPLE WHO ORDERED THIS “AUTHENTICALLY SYNTHETIC GOLD EYES” PRODUCT WERE SATISFIED WITH THE RESULTS, announces the third result.

Will groans. He keeps scrolling, but he just sees more and more ad results for ancestry kits, contacts, and fake gold eyes. It’s not surprising, given what Will has heard about gold eyes, but he has no idea exactly how accurate his information is. Ask any child about gold eyes and the accuracy of the information they reveal is normally on par with their information on what sex is.

Which is to say, it’s not accurate at all.

He does have faint memories of his pastor saying that gold eyes were destined to burn in hell, which . . . well, it’s not like Will thought he was destined for heaven anyways, but he’d like to hear it from a more unbiased source than a pastor.

Finally, on the very bottom of the page, he sees the first result that looks more informative than trashy, and he clicks on it. The title is *Gold Eyes: On Those Who Walk Among Us*, which, granted, is a bit dramatic, but Will’s read far worse titles from essays masquerading as academic material so he just tucks a fresh towel under his sopping wet butt, wipes the sweat from his forehead, and starts reading.

---

*And to the demons, the Lord said,* Let your transgressions be marked as well, so that your children will know the heat of from whence they came, and to whence they will be returned if they do not repent. *And the demons looked upon the faces of the children of those they had lain with, and lo, their children were driven mad with heat and longing and desire, so that man might know where demons had meddled where they ought not to.*

---

An hour later, Will is still cursing, but now it's more on the resigned side than the panicked. The article was thankfully tastefully written, but all the subtle hints and vague implications in the world won't cover up for the fact that Will's body has finally decided to acknowledge its supernatural heritage in the most obnoxious way ever: with slick out of his butt, sex on his mind, and gold eyes in his face.

The Bible says that gold eyes and heats were punishments laid down by God upon the children of angels and demons, because God had only intended the angels and demons to wage their war for conquering humankind through whispers and miracles and sightings in the dark, and instead, both sides had decided to seed the battlefield ahead of time. Will has never been a stanch believer, but he can't argue with what is going on in his body, and despite the centuries, science has no way of predicting who is going to pop a slick bum with a side of gold eyes and who won't. If not for the rapid spiking of the subjects' temperatures and the copious amount of documentation of massive and seemingly unprompted orgies, science might not even acknowledge that heat even exists.

"I guess Mom was holding back," Will tells Winston, who whuffs at him and wags his tail hopefully.

Will scrubs a hand over his face. The urgency to propagate his genes has died down a little – there's nothing like meticulous descriptions of castration experiments carried out in the dark ages to act as a boner-killer – and thankfully Will's head isn't exactly clear but he now can realize that his pack really, really wants breakfast. And probably to pee in the backyard.

So Will wraps a new towel around his sopping behind and goes to kick open the front door. The dogs flee past him in a flurry of fur and tails and joyous barks, and the rush of cold air helps clear Will's thoughts.

One, he needs to do laundry while his mind is still semi-clear.

Two, he probably needs to get a dogsitter.

And three, he really needs to take another look at that supernatural parent summoning ritual diagram.

---

*And the boy prayed to his absent father, and in the distance two figures appeared. One was crowned in stars and garbed in clouds, and the other was wreathed in sun and clad in shadows.* How might I know who tells the truth and who does not? *The demon offered the boy a ritual, sigils inscribed in dirt and wet with blood, that might reveal to who he might offer a greeting as kin and who he might shun as a stranger. The angel said only,* Do you not believe the word of a true servant of our Father? *And the boy looked into the eyes of the angel and the demon both, and then he took the hand of one of them and introduced him henceforth as his father.*

---

In all honesty, the ritual isn't *that* difficult. One merely has to find a crossroads and take great care to replicate the symbols, exactly as they were given to the first of the children who had questioned exactly to which lineage they belonged.

Will prints out the ritual on the biggest sheet of paper he has, and then he sets off down the driveway. It's at least a calm day, so his ritual won't blow away in the mind. It is freezing, but the heat that burns in Will's bones ensures he doesn't feel it at all, and right now he's a lot more concerned with getting answers out of his supposedly supernatural mother than with preventing the common cold.

There's only one road to Will's house and the other farmsteads in the area, and it doesn't quite make a cross where it meets his driveway, but Will supposes it should be good enough.

He squints at his reference paper, and then he sets about drawing the symbols.

First is a giant circle, for remembrance and for containment. Angels and demons often don't appreciate being summoned and sometimes don't even remember their children until the child in question is standing in front of them. The circle is made up of three lines: one for the first angel, one for the first demon, and one for the first human. They don't need to be perfectly straight, but each needs to be unbroken, for no human with a meek will can hope to force an angel or demon into a summoning circle.

Next is to draw out a flame and an eye, one symbol each for the marks laid down by God. They can be anywhere within the circles, but they must be perfectly opposite, so that they may act as magnets: one to draw in, one to repulse. That way the angel or demon doesn't just step out of the circle.

Finally, there is the actual summoning sigil. It is called the three of swords, but when Will squints at the diagram, they really don't look anything like swords. Even worse, because the entire ritual is essentially one giant circle, Will can't tell which side is up and which side is down. He rotates the diagram several times, and each time he finds himself thinking that obviously it's not this way up.

Will knows that what he should do is go back inside and look on his computer, but his driveway is very long and chances are pretty good that once he goes back inside, his moment of clarity will be gone, and he'll end up on the evening news for starting an orgy somewhere in town.

So Will picks a direction and scribbles out the three little sticks for the three of swords.

Drawing done, Will takes his hand and presses it to the blade of the knife he'd grabbed out of the kitchen. All the properly drawn sigils in the world aren't going to do anything with something to spark the ritual, and usually blood is the best choice. The website had been pretty clear that people who had used lesser materials, like hair or nails or tears, had had results that were less than stellar, if they even had any at all. Blood calls to blood, after all.

Will lets one drop fall, and out of the corner of his eye he sees the flame he'd drawn to face the rising sun turn red. The eye turns red with the next drop, and then the circles at the edge begin to glow like a star.

A quick hop and Will hits the ground just as the circles roar to life like a wildfire finding a heap of dry kindling.

Now all Will has to do is wait.

---

Hannibal Lecter is just settling down to a nice, quiet luncheon when he feels a strange tingle in his abdomen. Normally this might be cause for concern, but Hannibal ignores it; he did have a very energetic hunt last night, and therefore he got both some refreshing exercise and some excellent meat out of the deal. His lunch fought and fought hard, and that isn't something Hannibal can say about most of his victims, who tend to do any combination of crying, begging, or running. The tinge, he tells himself, is probably a mark of his lunch's fists.

Then, just as he arranges the perfect mouthful on his spoon, flames gold as the sun swallow him whole.

The mouthful of lunch falls sadly to the table.

---

To say that Hannibal is angry at being summoned is a vast understatement. Summoning is the fate of crossroads demons and other minor ilk; it should never be the fate of a prince of hell. Only the Morningstar or another prince of hell would have the right to do such a thing, and the Morningstar has his own ways of communication besides crude summoning. As for the other princes of hell, well, they generally know better than to bother Hannibal.

Hannibal lets the visage of his human form burn away in the presence of the holy fire. It's almost a relief, actually, to let out the horns and claws of his true form, like stretching a muscle long since disused.

When he arrives at his new destination, Hannibal is *more* than ready for a feast, and he summons the shadows to him to ensure that he appears as a true prince of hell, with hellfire and brimstone and lightning. He says, *WHO DARES TO SUMMON –*

And then he stops, because in drawing breath to speak, he also drew in the most intoxicating scent he's ever smelled.

Hannibal has lived for millennia, but he's never smelled anything like this: the first droplet in a rainstorm, the smoke of a fire raging through an ancient forest, fresh mint picked straight off the plant, blood from a fresh kill, sparks from metal pulled fresh from the flame and fed straight to the iron. And then there are the scents to which there are no human words for, since so human could ever experience them: the cold wind around the stars, the clouds of thermal vents deep in the seas, the inferno of a bubbling volcano, apples in the garden of Eden.

A shaky voice breaks Hannibal out of his stunned reverie. "Uh, so I'm guessing you are . . . not my mother?"

Hannibal opens his eyes. He hadn't even realized he had closed them to get another deeper, breath intake of that beautiful, bewitching, inhuman scent.

The speaker is a human male, shivering and sweating in the cold breeze, with brown curls and blue eyes and skin pale from lack of sun. He's wearing next to nothing, just shorts and a shirt and a towel, and he's sweated through all of it. He has a crumpled piece of paper in one hand and a knife in the other.

Hannibal inhales again. Perhaps the shivering and sweating isn't due to just the breeze.

He looks down, and confirms that he is standing in a summoning circle. It's crudely done, but all of the circles are complete and all of the sigils are present. Hannibal knows this ritual intimately, which is why it only takes a second to realize why the speaker was expecting perhaps a more . . . familial response.

"You've drawn the three of swords upside down," Hannibal says curtly.

The speaker flushes, and Hannibal has to restrain himself when the rush of color into the man's cheeks is matched by a rush of scent from the man's presumably aching genitals.

"I was kind of in a rush. I didn't think it would summon the wrong person; the website did say that results were . . . kind of miss and match."

Hannibal sniffs. "The ritual was provided to your kind in perfect detail. It's not my fault if humans aren't patient enough to properly replicate those details."

"Hey, I woke up this morning with an overpowering urge to rut all over my house," the speaker fires back. "I'm not exactly in the most patient frame of mind. I didn't even *know* my mother was an angel. Or demon. Or whatever you are."

"I am a prince of hell. Do you mind letting me out?"

The speaker gapes at him. Perhaps he didn't realize that only a prince of hell could summon flame and brimstone. Or perhaps the heat is beginning to truly obliterate his comprehension skills. His scent is certainly beginning to compromise Hannibal's, and Hannibal hasn't been compromised since the first war.

Hannibal adds, "If I let you out, I can determine whether you are one of ours or one of theirs."

The speaker shuts his mouth abruptly, either realizing how rude he is being or just not wanting to dry out his mouth. "How do I know you won't kill me?"

"That would be rude."

"And rudeness is definitely the one obstacle that holds back a *prince* of *hell* from turning me into a tree, or setting me on fire, or just, I don't know, vanishing me from existence."

"But of course. Without principals, we would not have lasted as long as we have against Heaven."

Hannibal also actually cannot vanish people from existence, as that is the province of an archangel alone, but it doesn't really matter. He has no intention of doing anything untoward

to someone who can produce a scent like that.

The man grunts, but finally he acquiesces to drag a foot through the outermost circle. With one circle, it is the matter of a thought for Hannibal to stretch his wings and vanish from the summoning circle to reappear next to the man. Up close, he smells even better, which Hannibal didn't think was possible; he must truly be in the early throes of heat, where his body still is working its hardest at attracting a suitable mate. If the man didn't live in such a deserted place – Hannibal can only sense a few souls nearby, and "nearby" is actually quite a distance away – he'd probably be fighting off a mob.

The man yelps "Jesus!" and whacks him with the knife.

"Please desist in that."

"Then maybe don't reappear and hover over me like a serial killer!"

This close, Hannibal can see how the man inhales and how his pupils dilate. It is very interesting; it is a rare human indeed that can catch the scent of a demon, and rarer still the kind of human who might find it arousing.

There is a reason why Hannibal and his kin waged a war to seek out compatible humans before Heaven's angels did.

"What do you smell?" Hannibal asks, because he is genuinely curious.

"Old paper, like books in a library," the man replies. His pupils are so dilated that his eye color is lost to fathomless black. He could almost pass for a demon like that. "Spices. And, uh, blood. And fur. Like from a freshly killed animal."

"Do you like it?"

The man doesn't answer, but he doesn't have to. He licks his lips and his cheeks bloom with red and his scent deepens. It's like he was *made* for drawing Hannibal in, like their Father took a handful of stardust and rearranged those atoms into the perfect configuration to ensure that Hannibal would take one breath and then not be able to resist taking another, and another, and another.

Hannibal leans in and lets the man's skin brush his. This close his scent is so intense that Hannibal feels like his nose is being burned, but it's such a good burn. "Tell me," he says again, in the same voice he had once used to coax one brother to turn on another, "do you like it?"

"Shut up," the man says. "Also – get over here. But shut up."

---

Of all the children of God, only two beings have ever stood in His presence and experienced revelation. Hannibal has never met Michael, the Firstborn and the General. Yet he had once asked Lucifer, the Morningstar and the Glorious, what it was like.

When Hannibal lays hands on Will Graham, he knows exactly what revelation is.

---

Later, after Will is so exhausted that Hannibal has lent him some of his strength to ensure he sleeps and recovers instead of slipping into a coma, Hannibal slips outside. He walks slowly down the driveway to the summoning circle. It is seared into the earth by Will's blood and Hannibal's fire, but even so, in the darkness the sight of it is very faint.

Still, Hannibal's eyes are enough to pick out the shape of the three of swords . . . and the orientation.

Hannibal returns to Will and stares at him. He doesn't look like much, of course, but his scent is indescribable. And his soul is *beautiful*.

Once, he had wondered why Lucifer had been so fascinated by Lilith.

Now he does not.

---

When Will wakes up, his throat is parched, his entire body is sore, and his house smells like meat. Opening his eyes exhausts him, and moving his arm takes more effort than running a marathon, and sitting up seems an unachievable goal. Will is actually out of breath when he manages it, but he does it – and then he's out of breath for another reason entirely.

For one thing, Will has never had such ostentatious curtains in his life. Even if he had, with seven dogs, they wouldn't look like that.

For another, Will's bedroom is *wrecked*. There are feathers everywhere and ragged pieces of blanket hanging off random corners and whenever Will shifts, the entire bed creaks like it's barely holding together.

While Will is still trying and failing to digest this, a man appears in his doorway. He is balancing the fanciest tray Will's ever seen in his arms, on top of which rests four plates piled high with food, two cups of what he suspects is freshly squeezed juice, and a very ornately folded flower.

*At least I know I didn't hallucinate the meat,* Will thinks.

"Good morning," says the prince of hell that Will accidentally summoned, and then sliced with a knife, and then stripped and bit and did the horizontal tango with. "Are you hungry?"

"You're a demon," Will says.

"Yes."

"You're a prince of hell."

"Correct."

"And you . . . made me breakfast."

"It was only proper."

Will blinks. “There’s a proper etiquette for what to do the morning after a human yanks you through space and time and then climbs into your pants?”

The demon’s mouth opens and then closes and then opens again. It’s a surprisingly human motion, for all that it is tiny and barely noticeable. Maybe it’s a little messed up that Will’s empathy works on demons as well as humans, but Will can feel his surprise and his annoyance, but above all his fond exasperation.

“There is a first time for everything,” is all the demon says.

Will isn’t expecting the rush of sentiment that admittance brings, but it fills him with a primal sense of satisfaction. However he managed it, he pulled a prince of hell through space and time with nothing more than his will and his blood, and he seduced a prince of hell into his bed for days using nothing more than his body and his scent. He can’t imagine many humans can claim that, much less have the added bonus of the demon cooking an amazing breakfast the morning after.

That being said, Will is still curious.

“That isn’t like . . . cursed or anything, right?” he asks.

The demon cocks an eyebrow even as he arranges the tray in front of Will with a persistence that belies a steady hand and probably a steadfast obsession with neatness. “Why would I need to curse you?”

“Well, I don’t know. This is my first time too.”

And wow, Will had thought *he* was proud of their liaison, but this demon is a peacock compared to him. His chest puffs out, his chin raises, and his eyes gleam even though the sun has long since risen and can’t possibly be at an angle to shine off his face. It should be terrifying – but then again, Will should have run when the demon first appeared, shouting and bringing down lightning, and all he had done was just whimper as his towel encountered a deluge of slick at one end and a steadily rising tent at the other and lost the entire bloody battle at remaining decent.

“Out of curiosity,” Will says, careful to keep the demon in the corner of his eyes as he starts to eat, “are you going to um. Stick around?”

“Your dishwasher is broken, you have no food besides a molded egg and fish guts, and you are in no state to leave – ”

Will overrides the litany of why-Will’s-house-sucks. “Because if you are, I should probably ask you for your name.”

“If you intend to Google me, I assure you, there isn’t much information.”

“You like to stick to the shadows, huh.”

The demon shrugs. “I see no reason to flaunt my nature. If humans are foolish enough to assume that I am human, then that is their problem, not mine.”

*A wolf among sheep,* Will thinks. “Well, indulge me in this human ritual. My name is Will. And yours is?”

“Hannibal.”

“ . . . Like the guy who took elephants over the Alps?”

“If one is looking for candidates for the rack, there are fewer better places than war,” Hannibal says. Which isn’t really an answer, but Will reads the truth in his face: he didn’t enjoy the war, but he did enjoy whatever he did during said war. Lucifer was the great seducer, and Will guesses that this demon, as a prince of hell, can’t be too shabby at seduction either.

Will takes a deep breath and keeps his eyes steady. He needs an honest answer for his next question. “Is that what you’re doing here? Looking for a candidate for the rack?”

“No.”

“Okay.”

Hannibal makes the best disgruntled face Will has ever seen. It’s obvious that he’s itching for Will to dig more deeply, to ask questions, to demand *why me* – but firstly, the breakfast Hannibal cooked smells amazing and he really wants to eat it before it goes cold, and secondly, let it never be said that Will doesn’t know how to tease. If teasing a prince of hell to the point of orgasm had been heady, teasing a prince of hell during the daytime, when they’re both sober and aware, is downright intoxicating.

After a long moment of quiet clinking as Will eats breakfast, Hannibal apparently decides he’s had enough and clears his throat. “I know why your summoning circle brought me to you.”

“Yeah, it malfunctioned because I drew the three of swords wrong and it grabbed a random demon.”

“I am not a random demon,” Hannibal says.

“Random to me.”

“Not quite.”

Will thinks about it for a minute. He doesn’t have eidetic memory, but his is still pretty good. And he’d definitely remember a face like Hannibal’s. “I’ve never met you.”

Hannibal flicks his fingers and gently makes three lines in the air. The only difference is that instead of Will having to imagine what the gesture might mean, when Hannibal does it, little sparks bloom from his fingertips, leaving three gently shimmering golden lines floating in mid air.

One gesture, and they come together, three ends angled downwards to meet at a single point. “This is the three of swords. It is a sigil meant to represent your past family, for at one time

you were as unit and now have grown apart to stride on separate paths. But you inverted this symbol." Another gesture, and the symbol flips, so that the three ends angle upwards, joined at the top like the outline of a pyramid. "This is what you drew."

"Sue me, my brain was melting."

Hannibal, for once, doesn't seem even the tiniest bit amused. "There is a reason that each sigil must be exactly replicated. If you draw the flame upside down, the circles will implode instead of protecting the summoner. If you draw the eye upside down, your eyes will melt instead of being able to comprehend the true form of whoever arrives."

"So, what, drawing the family sigil upside down means I got a prince of hell instead of my mother?"

"If the sigil is inverted, then it no longer means past family. It instead represents people on separate paths that will be joined together. This sigil now means future family."

Will, who had been aiming for a bite of the lovely sausage, instead bites down hard on the fork. The tang of metal and spark of pain do him a favor, though; they ground him so that he doesn't have to pinch himself. Because what Hannibal is saying sounds patently ridiculous, but Will has empathy; he only needs to look to know that Hannibal is dead serious. Plus, he figures a prince of hell is a probably a better authority on ritualistic symbols than the guy who Googled it for half an hour.

Still. "What are you saying, Hannibal?"

"I am saying," Hannibal says slowly, "that the ritual did not pluck me up randomly. You summoned a person from your future, instead of your past. So instead of your mother, you summoned . . . me. At one point, our paths would have crossed, and we would have walked the same road together."

Will gives into the urge and pinches himself. And rubs his ears for good measure. "Are you sure I didn't just mess up the ritual in some other way?"

"Yes."

"There is no way that our paths would have crossed. I work for the FBI, for crying out loud. What would I have to do with a . . . well, someone who dresses like you?"

Hannibal opens his mouth to answer, but he's interrupted by the rather shrill tone of Will's cellphone. Will groans, because there's only one person with that ringtone in Will's contacts for a reason, and he won't stop calling until Will answers or he turns up on Will's doorstep. And given that Will has every interest in Agent Jack Crawford not turning up right now, he motions at Hannibal and then starts scrambling around on the desk near the bed, shifting aside feathers and blanket scraps, until he finds his cellphone.

"What," Will says.

“I’m sending you a list of psychiatrists,” Jack says. “You need to pick one and get evaluated in order to go back into the field with me. It needs to be done by Monday.”

“Jack – ”

“If you want to help save lives, this is how it’s done. Everyone at the FBI goes through psych evals.”

“I’m not FBI.”

Jack is entirely unsympathetic. “You went with me to the crime scene, Will. That means you’re one of us.” Switching gears, Jack continues, “Now, all of those psychiatrists are accepted by the FBI, but I should tell you that Dr. Alana Bloom vetted them all. So they should be fine.”

Will is familiar with that particular tone of Jack’s voice. He has been present for their arguments. He imagines Alana had choice words for Jack when he went to her about clearing Will for the field, and perhaps even more if Jack asked her to be the one to do it. But Jack is persistent, so Alana probably caved and offered up a replacement suggestion. “And who did Dr. Bloom recommend?”

“Dr. Hannibal Lecter. He’s the first name. I expect to hear from him shortly about you.”

Then Jack hangs up, because that’s just how he is.

Will looks at the phone, and then up at Hannibal. Hannibal’s face is entirely blank; Will has no idea if he heard Jack’s end of conversation or not, because he knows absolutely nothing about demon abilities beyond the fact that they apparently have no refraction period and are also incredibly strong.

Will clears his throat. “I’m uh. I’m being recommended to request your services as a psychiatrist, Dr. Lecter.”

Hannibal looks equal parts delighted and smug.

“Shut up,” Will tells him. “I’m pretty sure that sleeping with me disqualifies me from the list of potential patients.”

“Only if they know.”

“With that Cheshire cat grin on your face, anyone who looks at your face will know,” Will says, because it’s the truth. The only thing Hannibal looks at more than his face is his behind.

“I can control myself.”

“What if I went into heat again?”

Hannibal smooths his shirt and sits primly at the edge of the bed. He still smells like pine forests and old books and spices, and Will can’t help how he sways slightly closer to

Hannibal. “That was your presentation heat. Typically, omegas fall into a regular pattern, and so you shouldn’t experience such a thing again until next year.”

“Omega.” Will rolls that word around in his omega. He had seen it on the website and had skipped that section when it started droning on and on about menstrual cycles. Maybe that was a mistake. “Is that what I am?”

Hannibal dips his head in agreement. “Males tend to present as omegas, and females as alphas. It ensures that no matter who you are, you are capable of both siring and bearing life.”

“Is that part of God’s curse or just an angelic and demonic thing?”

“That would be a question for our Father.”

It’s very interesting, the way Hannibal says that. He clearly has no reverence for God, and yet he still calls him by a familial title. Will wonders what made Hannibal rebel. Something tells him that Lucifer probably didn’t have to try to hard when he whispered in Hannibal’s ear, if the devil even did. Will could totally see Hannibal rebelling on his own.

“So, uh. What now?”

“Now, you will finish your breakfast, and then you will shower, and then I will begin cooking lunch.”

Will looks into Hannibal’s face and reads only sincerity. *The Devil never lies,* Will remembers his childhood pastor saying. *That is why he is the great seducer.* “You really intend to just . . . stay at my house?”

“Well, eventually I would like to bring you to mine. My kitchen is far better equipped than your own.”

“My house. My life. My – ” Will waves a hand. “You mean to remain in my life. With me. Little old human me.”

Hannibal leans close and kisses him very gently on the cheek. Even now, the faintest wisp of Hannibal’s scent makes Will tremble in anticipation. His hand, when he strokes Will’s face, is warm and gentle, but Will can feel the strength in his fingers, the same ones that left dozens of bruises along Will’s hips and chest and wrists. Hannibal is a demon who spat in the face of God and sauntered backwards into hell and is regarded highly enough by the Devil to be named a prince of hell. Hannibal, on a whim, commanded elephants over the Alps and terrorized the Roman Empire. Hannibal passes for a human so well that he’s a respected psychiatrist that the FBI is willing to go to for help.

And yet for some reason he wants Will.

“Oh my dear Will,” Hannibal says, “now that I’ve found you, I never intend to leave.”

FINIS

Chapter End Notes

A/N: And then because Will is not an idiot, he does not become Hannibal's patient, he does not compromise on his seven dogs, and he does not let Hannibal keep wandering around without a plastic hairnet to go with his plastic suit. He does enjoy people-sausage for breakfast though. And then they live happily-ever-after. (If you want to know whether Will is half demon or half angel, I honestly didn't plan an answer sooooo it's up to you! Let me know in the comments, I'm curious what y'all think)

Also, the original summary for this (and by that I mean when I told my friends about it) was "Will tries to summon his mother and accidentally yeets Hannibal through space & time.

Day 3: Monster Mash = What if those antlers in the BSHCI were real?

End Notes

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